

State Representative Peter J.

**Daley**

Democratic Chairman, Consumer Affairs Committee

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Summer/Fall 2013

## A REPORT FROM THE HOUSE CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### Representing the 49th Legislative District of Fayette and Washington counties

in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives is an honor and responsibility I hold dearly.

Above all, I'm here to serve you. My district offices in Brownsville, Donora and Claysville are fully staffed and eager to help you with any state-government issue.

This year, I was appointed by House leadership as the new Democratic chairman of the House Consumer Affairs Committee.

The committee oversees a number of Pennsylvania industries and entities, including natural gas, electric and water utilities; the telecommunications and cable industries; and the Public Utility Commission. The issues and legislation deliberated by the panel have direct effects on people's pocketbooks.

Consumer issues have always been a passion of mine during my 30 years representing the 49th Legislative District. I look forward to keeping you abreast of committee news and any issues dealing with consumers. I always appreciate input and suggestions.

You may contact me through my website, [www.pahouse.com/Daley](http://www.pahouse.com/Daley), where you may sign up for e-mail alerts and access a wealth of information, from news releases and pictures to helpful state resources.

*If you have any questions, comments and/or concerns, we're here to help. Please do not hesitate to call or reach out. We're here for you!*

All the best,

### On the Consumer Affairs Committee radar

The tentative agenda for the 25-member committee includes:

- Implementation of energy efficiency and conservation programs;
- Deregulation of basic telephone service;
- Payday lending legislation;
- One Call system to protect underground facilities;
- Fair debt-collection practices; and
- State franchise laws.

### HOW DOES REDISTRICTING AFFECT YOU?



Current  
49th District

### Future 49th District, December 2014



The Pennsylvania Supreme Court earlier this year upheld a redistricting plan that redraws the boundaries of all 203 state House and all 50 state Senate districts.

Effective December 2014, the plan moves various townships and boroughs into and out of the 49th Legislative District, which I currently represent. Depending on where you live, you could be in a different legislative district and represented by a different state representative – **but not until late next year.**

All the statewide changes are available on the Legislative Reapportionment Commission's website, [www.redistricting.state.pa.us](http://www.redistricting.state.pa.us).

Much of the current 49th Legislative District will not be affected by the changes, including the City of Monongahela; Fallowfield, West Bethlehem and West Pike Run townships; and Allenport, Beallsville, California, Charleroi, Coal Center, Deemston, Donora, Dunlevy, Elco, Long Branch, Marianna, North Charleroi, Roscoe, Speers, Stockdale, Twilight and West Brownsville boroughs.

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## REDISTRICTING *Continued from page 1*

However, there are significant changes to the 49th Legislative District. The following municipalities will remain in the 49th District until December 2014 and then move to another legislative district:

### **Fayette County**

- Brownsville Township – 50th District
- Menallen Township (part) – 52nd District
- Redstone Township – 50th District

### **Washington County**

- Amwell Township – 15th District
- Blaine Township – 15th District
- Donegal Township – 15th District
- East Finley Township – 15th District
- Morris Township – 15th District
- West Finley Township – 15th District
- Claysville Borough – 15th District

Municipalities that now are in districts other than the 49th Legislative District but will move to the 49th in December 2014 are:

### **Fayette County**

- Washington Township (all)
- Franklin Township
- Jefferson Township
- Belle Vernon Borough
- Fayette City Borough
- Newell Borough

### **Washington County**

- Carroll Township (all)
- North Bethlehem Township
- Bentleyville Borough
- Cokeburg Borough
- Ellsworth Borough
- New Eagle Borough

It is important to note that these changes do not affect your township, borough or school district affiliation. Again, the transition will take effect in December 2014. No matter the changes, I remain committed to providing the best of service to all citizens.

As always, my offices are available for any questions you may have.

## Veterans' Corner



**Pennsylvania vehicle owners** can show their support of veterans with the "Honoring Our Veterans" license plate available through PennDOT.

The plate features images of the American flag and a bald eagle with the words "Honoring Our Veterans."

The plate is available for cars and light trucks. It costs \$35, and \$15 from each sale goes to the Veterans Trust Fund, which provides grants to veterans' service organizations and other organizations assisting Pennsylvania veterans.

Please call or stop by any of my offices for a form to obtain the new plate or for help with any other PennDOT driver or vehicle service.

## Taking the fight to Harrisburg!

### **Bills that I have introduced to improve the lives of all Pennsylvanians**

#### **Small Disaster Assistance Program**

I am reintroducing legislation – House Bill 1616 – which would establish a state-level Small Disaster Assistance Program.

The program would extend assistance to our communities when a natural or manmade disaster strikes, such as the flooding that hit our area in late June and early July.

Homeowners, renters, small businesses, and municipalities would be eligible for grants and low-interest loans to make necessary repairs, replace personal effects and tend to hazardous situations.

In time of need, people and communities should have this resource available.

#### **Turnpike speed limit**

My House Bill 932 would authorize the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission to post 70 mph speed limits on sections now posted at 65 mph and deemed safe to support the increased speed.

#### **Protecting franchise owners**

My House Bill 1620 would direct the state Department of Community and Economic Development to develop fair, equitable and responsible franchise practices.

The bill would lay out basic rules for franchise operations – such as providing advance notice if the company plans to open another franchise near an existing one and establishing compensation guidelines in such instances.

The goal is to prohibit both parties from destroying or injuring the other party's ability to receive the full expected benefits of the contract.

#### **Debt-collection ground rules**

My House Bill 1633 would require debt collectors and creditors to provide consumers with written verification of any alleged debt sought for collection.

During times of financial duress, debtors should have the facts spelled out clearly for them. The legislation also would require debt collectors and creditors to state whether the debt is too old to be lawfully collected under the statute of limitations.

Nothing in the bill would prevent anyone from collecting what they are owed or from filing a lawsuit to pursue collection of a debt.

#### **Early retirement for teachers**

My House Bill 1612 would provide incentives for early retirement for public school teachers. It would potentially create as many as 10,000 new jobs for young teachers at no net cost to state pension funds or the General Fund.

#### **Early retirement for state employees**

My House Bill 1611 would potentially create as many as 4,000 new entry-level state jobs by providing early retirement incentives for state employees at no net cost to the pension funds or General Fund. Eligibility would be 30 years' service, or a worker's age plus years of service are equal to 80.

Earlier this year, I helped to pass House Bill 159, which would establish the Veterans First Tax Credit for small businesses. The measure would provide a \$4,000-a-year tax credit to businesses with less than 100 employees to hire veterans who are currently unemployed. The bill is expected to create 12,500 jobs for state veterans who have been out of work for more than six months.

I am proud to support H.B. 159. The bill was sent to the Senate for consideration. Please contact your state senator and request support for this important bill.



*I hosted a news conference late last year to draw attention to the need to repeal changes to Pennsylvania's Small Games of Chance Act.*

## Fixing what was broken

The reporting rules for organizations operating small games of chance – such as booster and social clubs, fire companies and veterans' organizations – have been put on hold until Feb. 1, 2014. The changes, brought about by Act 2 of 2012, have created much confusion and consternation.

I took the lead last year in speaking out against some of these onerous requirements. This session, I have actively sought support for legislation, including my own H.B. 933, to repeal Act 2.

The state House this year passed H.B. 290, which would repeal the changes in last year's Act 2 that have caused so much harm.

The bill, now before the state Senate, would:

- Enable organizations making less than \$40,000 a year from small games of chance to keep the money for operating expenses;
- Exempt groups making less than \$40,000 a year from requirements to file annual reports, perform background checks and maintain separate bank accounts for game proceeds;
- Allow "Night at the Races," poker runs and other games; and
- Increase prize limits for small games of chance.

House Bill 290 also makes other improvements so civic-minded groups, who do so much good for our communities, can thrive and prosper.



*I was honored to participate in the renaming of a section of the Mon-Fayette Expressway – Pennsylvania Turnpike 43 – from Uniontown to Brownsville. The section will now be known as the POW/MIA/KIA Memorial Highway to honor all our military veterans' service and sacrifices and acknowledge that we are eternally grateful for their service to our country.*

## A dismal state budget

With only a few exceptions, Pennsylvania's new \$28.4 billion state budget is a status quo spending plan at a time when Pennsylvania can ill afford to continue down the road of mediocrity and muted opportunities.

The spending blueprint's greatest failures are in the areas of greatest need – education funding and job creation.

Local schools will continue to struggle with state cuts that have ranged from a low of more than \$300 per student at Trinity Area to more than \$500 per student at the Brownsville, Charleroi and Ringgold school districts. That's at least \$13,000 less for each classroom in some of these districts.

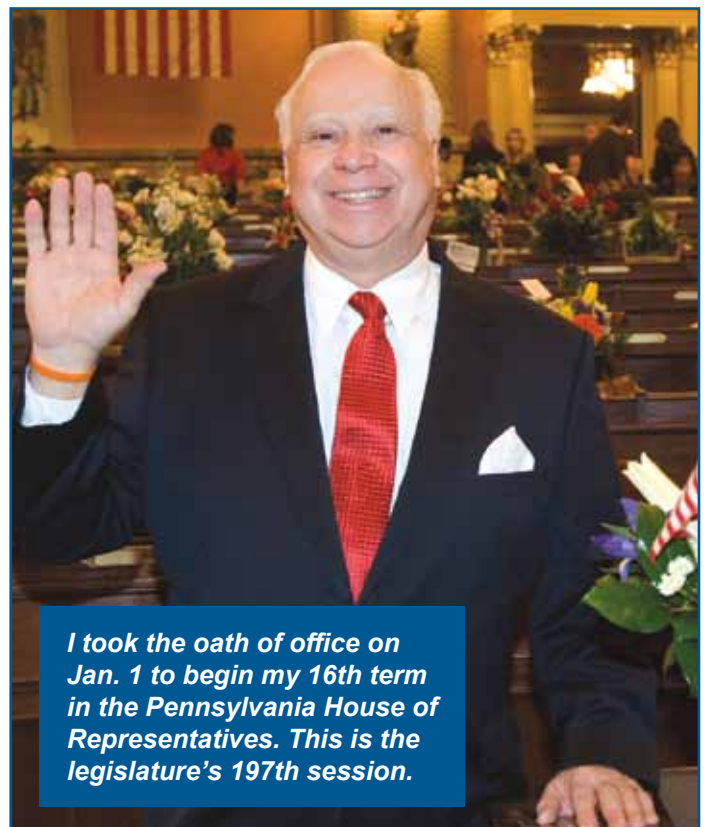
The budget is oblivious to Pennsylvania's floundering economy. The commonwealth has one of the worst records on job creation, yet this budget traipses merrily down the road of high unemployment and lackluster economic opportunities.

One bright spot was found in a budget-related bill that eliminates the sales and use tax on fixed-wing aircraft sales, parts, maintenance and repair in Pennsylvania.

I've championed doing away with the sales tax on our aviation and aeronautics industries for many years, and I'm elated with this development. It becomes effective this fall.



*I congratulate Darcie Phillips, of Amity, Washington County, and her parents, for winning one of 25 Pennsylvania Farm Show Foundation Scholarships during the 97th Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg.*



*I took the oath of office on Jan. 1 to begin my 16th term in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. This is the legislature's 197th session.*



# Peter J. Daley

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*It was smiles by the hundreds during my fifth annual Kidz Fair in July at the Center in the Woods in Brownsville. Hundreds turned out for hands-on crafts, exhibits, demonstrations and entertainment. The free event also is attended by state and county agencies with resources on hand about various programs and services available to families.*



## News You Can Use

A new website puts reams of information about state government at your fingertips.

**PennWatch** – [www.pennwatch.pa.gov](http://www.pennwatch.pa.gov) – provides residents state-related information on the budget, spending, revenue, employees, performance and much more.

I voted to create PennWatch – the Pennsylvania Web Accountability and Transparency Act – in 2011 because I believe all Pennsylvanians should know how, when and where their state tax dollars are being spent.

**A new state Public Utility Commission website** – [www.PAGasSwitch.com](http://www.PAGasSwitch.com) – is designed to make shopping for a natural gas supplier easy and convenient. The online shopping tool enables consumers to compare natural gas suppliers' rates and programs. Comparing rates and deals for electricity shoppers is available at its sister website, [www.PaPowerSwitch.com](http://www.PaPowerSwitch.com).

Remember to review offers and options thoroughly when choosing a supplier. If you need assistance, please call the Office of the state Consumer Advocate toll free at 800-684-6560 or visit the website at [www.oca.state.pa.us](http://www.oca.state.pa.us).

## Pa. loses a legend: Stan 'The Man' Musial

We lost a great man this year – the inimitable Stan “The Man” Musial.

The Donora native passed away Jan. 19 at his home in the St. Louis suburbs surrounded by his loving family.

I was proud to sponsor a condolence resolution expressing sorrow over Stan’s passing and extend condolences to his family, friends, colleagues and his countless fans across Pennsylvania and America.

Musial's baseball prowess is legendary:

- He won seven National League batting titles and played in 24 All-Star Games.
- He was a three-time MVP.
- He led the St. Louis Cardinals to three World Series championships.
- He hit 475 home runs and amassed 3,630 hits.
- He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame

immediately after retiring at the end of the 1963 season.

However, Musial’s baseball statistics slight his accomplishments and stature.

Musial played a crucial role in the early career of Jackie Robinson, persuading his St. Louis teammates not to boycott playing against him.

Back in western Pennsylvania, Musial led a walkout from a Pittsburgh restaurant that balked at serving a black teammate.

Musial remains renowned as a kind-hearted gentleman who never forgot his roots and retained his membership at the American Legion in Donora through the years.

Sadly, we will not see his kind again.

